

NOTES ON SNAKES COLLECTED IN THE JALPAIGURI
DISTRICT.

BY

MAJOR F. WALL, I.M.S., C.M.Z.S.

(*With a Map.*)

Last year I received a collection of snakes from Mr. W. A. Jacob, I.F.S., made by himself in the Jalpaiguri District.

With two exceptions, *viz.*, one *Dipsadomorphus cynodon*, which was caught west of the Tista River, and the *Naja bungarus*, which was killed in the Buxa Division (2,000 ft. elevation), about 100 miles east of the Tista, all were collected between 10 to 50 miles east of the Tista, at altitudes varying from about 500 to 1,200 feet.

From this collection it would appear that the boundary between the Bengal and Assam Tracts, north of the 25th parallel is placed too far to the east by Blanford (see figure A). There can be little doubt that this boundary should be the Tista River or still further west (see figure B). It even seems probable that all the territory lying above the 25th parallel east of Purneah should be included in the Assam Tract (see interrupted red line in figure B). In support of this are the following records. From the east *Typhlops diardi* and *Simotes cycurus* have been found as far west as Purneah. *Simotes albocinctus* as far west as Kaliganj.

Of Indian snakes *Polyodontophis sagittarius* is recorded as far east as Darbangha, *Simotes arnensis* to Kaliganj, *Zamenis fasciolatus* to Monghyr, *Dipsadomorphus forsteni* and *Bungarus caeruleus* to Purneah. All of these records are based on specimens in the Indian Museum.

TYPHLOPIDÆ.

Typhlops diardi.

One adult specimen. The scale rows are 26 anteriorly and in midbody, and 24 at a point two headslengths before the anus. The reduction of rows is singular and due to a fusion of the 2nd and 3rd rows and the 5th and 6th rows both on the right side of the median ventral.

COLUBRIDÆ.

Tropidonotus stolidus.

Seven examples.

Tropidonotus piscator.

One specimen of variety *quincunciatus*.

Pseudoxenodon macrops.

A single specimen.

Lycodon aulicus.

One specimen of variety D of Boulenger's Catalogue. The ventrals and subcaudals 211 + 67. Anal divided.

Coluber cantoris.

A single example. The costals are in 21 rows, two headlengths behind the head and in midbody, 17 at a point two headlengths before the anus. Ventrals and subcaudals 229 + 69. The 3rd supralabial is not divided, and the 4th and 5th only touch the eye.

*Dendrophis proarchos** (Wall).

2 examples. The costals are in 15 rows anteriorly and in midbody, 9 at a point two headlengths before the anus. The ventrals and subcaudals 182 + 142 and 192 + ?, the latter a ♀. The anal is entire in both specimens and both entirely agree with the many Assam specimens I have seen of this snake. The vertebral are broader than long. The supralabials are 9, the 4th, 5th and 6th touching the eye. The ♀ contained 7 eggs but the date of capture is unfortunately not on record.

Simotes albocinctus.

One variety *typica* (Cantor), and two of a variety calling for special remark. It is most like *juglandifer* (Wall) (variety C of Boulenger's Catalogue), but differs in that there are no black walnut-shaped spots. A darker broad stripe 5 rows wide, runs down the middle of the back, and a narrower dark stripe between the 3rd and 4th rows above the ventrals and there are no crossbars. I suggest the name *dorsolateralis* for it. It is probably only a modified form of *juglandifer* for a suggestion of the walnut marks is sometimes noticeable here and there if looked for beneath a lens. The costals are in 19 rows, anteriorly and in midbody, and 15 at a point two headlengths before the anus. The ventrals and subcaudals are var. *typica* 191 + ?, and in the others 170 + 30, and 162 + 39. The supralabials in variety *typica* are 8, the 4th and 5th touching the

* A description of this snake appears in a paper on the Snakes of Assam in this Number, page 827.

eye on the right side, normal on the left. In both specimens of variety *dorsolateralis* the 3rd supralabial is divided into an upper and a lower part. (Hence the subocular of Boulenger). In one of these the lower fragment is not completely excluded from contact with the eye.

Dryophis prasinus.

Two examples. The costals are in 15 rows anteriorly, and in midbody and in the ♂ come to 11 at a point two headlengths before the anus. In the ♀ they reduce to 9 at the same site. The ventrals and subcaudals of the ♂ are 198+157? and of the ♀ 201+159. There are two loreals in the ♂ 1+1, three in the ♀ 1+1+1. In the ♂ the 4th supralabial is not divided, but in the ♀ it is so, that the upper part only touches the eye.

Chrysopelea ornata.

One brilliantly coloured example of variety E of Boulenger's Catalogue (III, p. 198). The costals are in 17 rows anteriorly and midbody, and 13 at a point two headlengths before the anus. The ventrals and subcaudals are 215×112.? (tail slightly docked). The last ventral as well as the anal is divided.

Dipsadomorphus cynodon.

Two fine examples of variety A of Boulenger's Catalogue (III., p. 79.). The costals are in 23 rows anteriorly, and in midbody, 15 at a point two headlengths before the anus. The ventrals and subcaudals are 255+126 and 256+123. One of these specimens was being attacked by a banded krait (*Bungarus fasciatus*) which Mr. Jacob shot.

Bungarus lividus.

One small example. The vertebrae are very slightly enlarged. The ventrals and subcaudals are 212+39.

Naia bungarus.

One young specimen, about 6 feet in length. The costals are 17 at a point two headlengths behind the head, 15 in midbody and 15 at a point two headlengths before the anus. The ventrals and subcaudals are 251+80, of the latter the first to the fifth are entire, the rest divided. It is black with narrow buff bands posteriorly. Mr. Jacob tells me that a pair of hamadryads were reported to

have been killed "in copula" on a tea garden close to him at the end of April or early in May last year.

VIPERIDÆ.

Lachesis gramineus.

A single specimen. The costal rows are 21 in the anterior and middle parts of the body, 15 at a point two headlengths before the anus. The ventrals and subcaudals 171+57. It is greenish-yellow in colour with a whitish flank line. It had evidently eaten some mammal for a mass of felt-like matted hair was protruding from the anus.